

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-4 (Cancelled)

5. (Previously Presented) A process for preparing butadiene from n-butane having the steps of
- A) providing a feed gas stream a comprising n-butane;
 - B) feeding the feed gas stream a comprising n-butane into at least one first dehydrogenation zone and nonoxidatively catalytically dehydrogenating n-butane to obtain a product gas stream b comprising n-butane, 1-butene, 2-butene, butadiene, hydrogen, low-boiling secondary constituents and in some cases steam;
 - C) feeding the product gas stream b of the nonoxidative catalytic dehydrogenation and an oxygenous gas into at least one second dehydrogenation zone and oxidatively dehydrogenating n-butane, 1-butene and 2-butene to obtain a product gas stream c comprising n-butane, 2-butene, butadiene, low-boiling secondary constituents and steam, said product gas stream c having a higher content of butadiene than the product gas stream b;
 - D) removing the low-boiling secondary constituents and steam to obtain a C₄ product gas stream d substantially consisting of n-butane, 2-butene and butadiene;
 - E) separating the C₄ product gas stream d into a stream e1 consisting substantially of n-butane and 2-butene and a product of value stream e2 consisting substantially of butadiene by extractive distillation;
 - F) feeding the stream e1 consisting substantially of n-butane and 2-butene and a cycle stream g comprising 1-butene and 2-butene into a distillation zone and separating into a 1-butene-rich product of value stream f1, a recycle stream f2

comprising 2-butene and n-butane and a stream f3 comprising 2-butene, and recycling the recycle stream f2 into the first dehydrogenation zone;

G) feeding the stream f3 comprising 2-butene into an isomerization zone and isomerizing 2-butene to 1-butene to obtain a cycle stream g comprising 1-butene and 2-butene, and recycling the cycle gas stream g into the distillation zone.

6. (Currently Amended) The process according to claim 5, wherein the ~~noncatalytic~~ nonoxidative catalytic dehydrogenation of n-butane is carried out autothermally.
7. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 5, wherein the feed stream a containing n-butane is obtained from liquefied petroleum gas (LPG).
8. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 5, wherein the extractive distillation is carried out using N-methylpyrrolidone as an extractant.
9. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 6, wherein the feed stream a containing n-butane is obtained from liquefied petroleum gas (LPG).
10. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 6, wherein the extractive distillation is carried out using N-methylpyrrolidone as an extractant.